



## 2021 CCCA Awards of Merit – Guidelines

The 2021 Awards of Merit will be presented in conjunction with the Associated Church Press (ACP), the Religion Communication Council (RCC) and Canadian Christian Communicators Association (CCCA) conference - *Opening New Portals Building Community*, to be held virtually from April 6 to April 9.

Below are the guidelines and a list of categories. An entry form in Word format will be included separately. Please read these guidelines carefully as there have been changes and eliminations of some of the categories.

We will be using an online system to submit awards again this year. Entries must be submitted in **pdf format**. Please email each of your entries individually and indicate category, division, category number in the subject line along with the entry form in Word format and email to: [ccca2021awards@gmail.com](mailto:ccca2021awards@gmail.com)

**Note:** Please **mail** your entries for the following categories: General Excellence category in magazines (two copies each of three issues and in newspapers (two copies each of three issues. (**\*Please note:** This year, entries for both categories do not have to be consecutive). Please send by mail to:

CCCA 2021 Awards of Merit  
8 MacDonald Avenue  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4N5

The deadline for award entries is **Friday, March 12**. Each entry must be from editions published in the calendar year 2020. Those who enter are allowed one free entry each.

**Entry Fees:** *\*Please make cheques payable to Canadian Christian Communicators Association and mail to the above address.*

For Circulation up to 9,999: \$20.00 for each entry  
For Circulation 10,000 and over: \$24.00 for each entry  
For Individuals: \$20.00 for each entry  
For Student Award: \$15.00 per entry  
A.C. Forrest Memorial Award: \$20.00 per entry

## SPECIAL AWARDS

### A.C. Forrest Memorial Award – Entry Guidelines

The A.C. Forrest Memorial Award is presented annually in honour of A.C. Forrest who was Editor of the *United Church Observer* for 23 years. It is presented for excellence in socially conscious religious journalism. The award is sponsored by the A.C. Forrest Award Committee of Observer Publications' Board of Directors.

Entries should be based on current news events or trends that raise religious ethical questions. The judge will consider quality of writing, depth of research, relevance and originality.

1. Entries will be judged based on the criteria set out above. This award is open to print and online entries from member publications. **Please note, only single articles are eligible to enter (i.e., not editorial packages).**
2. Prizes will be awarded: \$1,000 first place prize for circulation up to 9,999 and \$1,000 first place prize for circulation above 10,000. There will be an honorable mention prize of \$100 a piece in each subdivision. Entries will be judged by one judge appointed by the CCCA.
3. An entry form must be included with your entry. Please email **one copy** of your entry for the judge to consider. Submissions must have been published in 2020. A maximum of **three** entries per publication is allowed.
4. Stories which have been entered for CCCA awards are also eligible for the A.C. Forrest Memorial Award. It is an open competition.

### STUDENT AWARD

(Co-Sponsored by *Faith Today* and *Love is Moving*)

The award is open to Canadian post-secondary students of all ages.

**Criteria:** Entries must be news articles or journalistic essays/opinion writing published during the 2020 calendar year. Self-published materials (e.g., on a blog managed by the author of the article) are not eligible. Judges will look for excellence in journalistic reporting, research and writing.

**Entry process for student articles published by CCCA members:** If the student article was published in a CCCA member publication or website, the staff of that member publisher can enter the student article on behalf of its author, as is done with most other

contest entries. Each entry requires a nominal fee (around \$15) paid by the member publisher, which goes toward honoraria for judges and related expenses.

**Entry process for non-CCCA articles:** Articles that are published in a periodical or on a website that is not a CCCA member can be entered directly by their author, if the author is an individual member of the CCCA or takes out such a membership as part of the entry application. In the case of the student category, the CCCA is waiving the cost of the individual membership, \$25 this year, as well as the entry fee for the first entry. So, a student who directly enters one article in the student category can do so for free and gains a free one-year membership to the CCCA. If the student wants to enter a second or third article, each of those would incur the fee of \$15 per entry.

### **General CCCA Awards – Entry Guidelines**

Entries must be from periodicals publishing two or more editions annually and your publication must be a member of the Canadian Christian Communicators Association. Some categories are based either on circulation or magazine/newspaper subdivisions. Ones with no subdivisions are open categories.

**Member publications can enter a maximum of four entries into each category.** There is no restriction on submitting the same item under different categories (e.g., a single photo could be entered in the appropriate photo category, photo spread and be part of a layout and design entry.)

Most categories are for original content. They may be staff-generated or first rights publication from a freelancer. The exception is in graphics, where stock graphics may be entered as part of front page or cover categories or in the layout and design categories.

Each entry must be accompanied by an appropriate entry form. Please complete these forms, stating your publication's editorial purpose in 25 words or less, along with your publication's intended audience. This will help the judges in assessing your entry. For author/artist/editor/designer, fill in only the blank applicable to this entry (e.g., writer for written material, editor for general excellence, designer for layout entries, etc.). This is where names are obtained for the certificates. A first, second and third place may be given in each category; **a publication may only place once per category** If the judges do not feel an award is merited, none will be given. If there are fewer than three entries in a category, only a first-place award will be given.

## REPORTING AND WRITING

### 1. EDITORIAL:

- a. Magazine
- b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* The successful editorial will take a well-argued stand on a current issue relevant to the readership and complex in its implications. If an editorial generated opposition and further debate, whether in letters to the editor or subsequent op-ed submissions, or even reaction in other publications, please point these out to the judges.

### 2. FROM THE EDITOR:

*Criteria:* From the Editor unpacks and showcases the periodical's leading articles and content, often with a personal anecdote and subject matter appropriate to the audience. The editorial letter also acts as an overview and serves to introduce the theme of that issue. Cogency, clarity, economy and flair are highlights of this category.

### 3. NEWS STORY:

*Criteria:* Winning submissions will be balanced, accurate, clearly structured and well written reports on events, issues and people of concern to the community of readers. If it is news it should be new – information new to readers concerning recent or ongoing events.

### 4. FEATURES (Nonfiction):

- a. Magazine
- b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* A feature is a single story of greater length than a news story which examines issues, trends, debates or theories current in the public imagination. Compelling writing, a wide range of sources, comprehensiveness and originality will be considered.

### 5. FEATURE SERIES:

*Criteria:* An entry in feature series must include two to four feature stories related by a theme or subject. These connected stories should be relatable, descriptive, memorable and lively, with a strong lead. Judges will look for relevance, quality of writing, detail and originality.

### 6. OPINION PIECE:

*Criteria:* Opinion writing will be judged on its ability to argue convincingly for a clear point of view without denigrating, belittling or ignoring the opposition. The writer must make the case, implicitly or explicitly, that the opinion being expressed matters.

## **7. COLUMN:**

**\*Submit examples from three issues either in print, online or both by one author and/or several authors as a single entry.**

a. Magazine

b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* Successful columns build a relationship with readers. Strong opinions are valued, but only if they connect with a readership. If a columnist has generated mail, for or against, indicate how often and how heated.

## **8. SERVICE JOURNALISM:**

*Criteria:* Stories in this category aid readers to engage with specific issues or in specific activities by providing background information, contact names and organizations, phone numbers, websites and/or strategies.

## **9. MEDIA REVIEW (Books, film, etc.):**

*Criteria:* Primarily book and movie reviews, though this category may include games, magazines, web-sites, podcasts or even festival reviews. Reviewers should be objective, informed observers who make reasonable arguments for their assessment of the work in question. Reviews should be of current works and the best should anchor the review to a theological or religious reflection or point to a broader truth.

## **10. BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:**

*Criteria:* This essay will use clear and thoughtful language to tie the biblical text, theology, ethics, or church history and teachings to the contemporary, lived experience of readers.

## **11. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE/FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT:**

*Criteria:* The subject's personal experience reveals lessons learned and shared insights from experience. The writing should be intelligent, lively, diverse, engaging, and preferably - but not always - inviting a reply.

## **12. INTERVIEW:**

*Criteria:* This category is reserved for question-and-answer format stories. Probing but brief questions should elicit surprising or insightful answers from the interview subject. Readers should come away feeling they have come close to someone remarkable – not the interviewer.

## **13. BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE:**

*Criteria:* This category involves extraordinary reporting on one person's life. Weight will be given to profiles of people who for reasons of notoriety or obscurity prove to be difficult subjects. Multiple sources and voices are preferred.

## GRAPHICS

**This is not an award for use of stock photography. Any photos that form an element in a graphic design must be first-time periodical publication. The graphic must inform the reader in ways that ordinary prose cannot. Stock graphics may be entered as part of front page or cover categories or in the layout and design categories.**

### **14. NEWS PHOTO:**

- a. Magazine
- b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* The winning photo should capture a critical moment or critical personality in the story which it accompanies, informing readers of something they would not otherwise know. Photos will be judged on the information conveyed. For this category we are looking for the reporters' craft. Cutline information should be complete.

### **15. FEATURE PHOTO:**

- a. Magazine
- b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* The winning photo will illustrate an idea or theme that directs the reader into the text. It will effectively convey the concept or theme behind a story, series or issue. Design, composition, lighting, concept and execution will be the criteria for judging.

### **16. PHOTO ESSAY:**

- a. Magazine
- b. Newspaper

*Criteria:* The winning essay will consist of at least four photos up to a maximum of 20 presented either on-line or on page. Photos will constitute the primary means of telling the story, with only enough text to place them in context. Photo reporting will be judged on journalistic merits of newsworthiness, enterprise and insight.

### **17. ORIGINAL ARTWORK:**

*Criteria:* The word "original" is the key to this category. The ability to illustrate an idea or theme that directs the reader into the text will be key.

### **18. FRONT COVER/PAGE:**

- a. Magazine, circulation of up to 9,999
- b. Magazine, circulation above 10,000
- c. Newspaper

*Criteria:* An effective and attractive design will combine text, typography, photography or illustration to draw the reader into the publication. It should be compelling without misrepresenting or distorting the content inside.

## **19. FEATURE LAYOUT & DESIGN:**

- a. Magazine, circulation of up to 9,999
- b. Magazine, circulation above 10,000
- c. Newspaper

**Criteria:** Judges will look at overall design, taking into account the complexity of the material and the number of elements the page designer must bring together. An engaging and balanced appearance, effective and captivating headlines and cut lines, and design that serves the content will win this category.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **20. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:**

**Criteria:** This award is for the publisher or organization that makes the best use of social media storytelling to meet the audience needs. Entries will be evaluated on graphic branding, content strategy, conversations generated (comments, tweets, shared links) and audience engagement (page/video views and brand activations). Entries can be submitted on single or multiple social channels and can include sponsored campaigns.

### **21. MARKETING CAMPAIGN:**

**Criteria:** Submit a successful public relations, marketing, or fundraising campaign done in 2020, which could be for a publication, an organization or a client. Include a description of the project's mission and goals, strategy, tactics, team and, of course, the results. Provide examples (print materials, video samples, photographs, electronic presentation, etc.) of media and/or promotional materials, special events, advertisements, displays, social media use, and any other materials that demonstrate the creativity and effectiveness of your campaign.

## **ONLINE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA**

### **22. BLOG:**

**Criteria:** Judges will look for thoughtful content, originality, quality of writing, readability, frequency, engaging titles, use of images and graphics, and responses to readers' comments. Provide the URLs of three different pages you would like judges to see.

### **23. VIDEO PRODUCTION:**

**Criteria:** Provide a URL to a full-length video produced and released in 2019. Include a statement of purpose for the video as well as a description of its distribution. The video should be engaging and well-suited to its audience, with quality photography, sound and design. This submission could be from an individual or an organization.

#### **24. PODCAST:**

**Criteria:** Submissions should include a statement of purpose for the series, as well as a description of its intended audience. The episodes will present topics relevant for that audience, with an engaging host(s), stimulating conversation, informative interviews or compelling storytelling. Quality sound and editing are important, as is frequency in which episodes are released. This award is for a podcast series, but entrants should submit links or downloadable files of three episodes, with information on how to access the entire series.

#### **25: GENERAL EXCELLENCE IN WEBSITE DESIGN:**

**Criteria:** This is a design category that seeks to recognize the ability of a website to get its content to readers quickly, efficiently and easily. The award goes to a website that looks appealing, is viewable and accessible on all devices, loads quickly, with none of the content hidden in awkward or mysterious categories. Intuitive navigation and organization, including effective use of menus, navigation bar and site map, combined with a clean, attractive layout will factor in judging.

### **GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Criteria for both Magazines and Newspapers:** Overall quality of the publication and appropriateness to its audience, including variety and quality of editorial content, design, photography, graphics and typography.

#### **26. GENERAL EXCELLENCE IN PRINT - MAGAZINE**

**\*Please submit two copies each of three issues**

#### **27. GENERAL EXCELLENCE IN PRINT - NEWSPAPER**

Denominational or ecumenical general-interest newspaper

**\*Please submit two copies each of three issues**